

Iowa Department of Human Services

**ALLEGED FATHER'S RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN ADMINISTRATIVE PATERNITY ESTABLISHMENT**

You have been named as the father of the child(ren) named in the Notice to Alleged Father of Intent to Establish Paternity. Please read all of the documents that you were served with. The decisions that you make about this action will greatly affect your legal obligations and the future of the child(ren) involved.

***What Are Your Rights?***

- \* Read the Notice to Alleged Father of Intent to Establish Paternity very carefully. That document states your options and the time frames for responding. If you do not meet those time frames, the Child Support Recovery Unit (hereafter called "Unit") may enter an order finding you to be the father of the child(ren) named and, if applicable, ordering you to pay support.
- \* You have the right to consult with or hire an attorney to represent you in this action. The Unit will not provide an attorney for you, give you legal advice, or pay for your attorney.
- \* If you do not think you are the father of the child(ren) named in the notice, you have a right to request genetic testing to determine, within a certain probability, whether you are the father. If the genetic testing shows that you are not the father, this action will be dismissed. If the genetic testing indicates that you could be the father, you have the right to a court hearing.
- \* You may agree that you are the child(ren)'s biological father. If you agree, an order will be entered establishing you as the child(ren)'s legal father.
- \* If support is at issue, you may also agree to the entry of the order for support. If you do agree, the order establishing paternity will also contain provisions for you to pay child support.

If you do not agree to the support provisions and you request a court hearing, the order establishing paternity will be entered, and you will have a right make your arguments regarding support to the court.

***What Are the Effects of a Paternity Order?***

If an order is entered finding you to be the father, the effects are as follows:

- \* You are legally established as the father of the child(ren).
- \* The child(ren) benefit from knowing who their legal father is for purposes of emotional well-being, inheritance rights, and information on family medical background.
- \* If the child(ren) were born in Iowa, your name will be entered on the birth certificate(s) as being the legal father.
- \* If the child(ren) were born outside of Iowa, the laws of the state in which they were born will govern what information is entered on the birth certificate(s).
- \* You have the right to petition the court for visitation privileges and custody.
- \* If support is at issue, you will be ordered to pay child support.
- \* You may be required to pay for medical support and/or provide medical insurance for the child(ren) through your employer or other group medical plan.
- \* If you are ordered to pay support and you have income, payment will be made by income withholding. If you do not pay the support as ordered, you will be subject to collection action, including, but not limited to, garnishment, setoff of state and federal tax refunds, administrative levy of accounts, orders to seek employment, license sanctions, and referral to credit agencies.
- \* You may be required to pay the costs of the legal action, including but not limited to, service fees, genetic testing costs, deposition costs, and court costs.